Abstract

A technique is provided to organize different virus signatures into anti-virus sets to minimize the impact on processor utilization due to the scanning of computer viruses. All of the virus signatures assigned to an anti-virus set share a common characteristic. The defined anti-virus sets are then associated with an executing agent so that whenever the executing agent's target file is accessed, the target file is scanned with virus signatures stored in the previously assigned anti-virus set to determine if the target file is contaminated with a virus.